

FILED IN THE  
U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

AUSA: PJC

Apr 25, 2022

*In Re: Request for Criminal Complaint and Arrest Warrant charging John T. Sanger and Eric A. Eagleton with Conspiracy to commit Theft of Government Property and Possession of Stolen Ammunition, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371.*

SEAN F. McAVOY, CLERK

County of Investigation: Spokane

STATE OF WASHINGTON           )  
County of Spokane                 ) ss

# AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, David M. White (hereinafter “Affiant”), being first duly sworn on oath,  
deposes and states:

1. Your Affiant has been a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) since August of 2021 and is currently assigned to the FBI’s Seattle Division, Inland Northwest Joint Terrorism Task Force (“INJTTF”). Prior to becoming a Special Agent, your affiant was employed as a Forensic Accountant for the FBI, Miami Division, since April of 2016. Since joining the FBI, your Affiant has investigated or assisted in investigating violations of federal law in matters concerning healthcare fraud, money laundering, public corruption, and is currently investigating matters related to domestic terrorism. As a Federal Agent, your Affiant is authorized to investigate violations of laws of the United States and is a law enforcement officer with the authority to execute warrants issued under the

authority of the United States. Your Affiant has received specialized training to perform those official duties and responsibilities and has been exposed to a variety of investigative techniques and resources, which include, but are not limited to, physical surveillance, monitoring court-authorized wiretaps, managing the use of confidential sources, and conducting searches of physical locations.

2. As a result of my training and experience, I know that it is a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371 for any person to conspire with one or more individuals to commit any offense against the United States and one or more of such persons do any act to affect the object of the conspiracy, in this case the Theft of Government Property, specifically military ammunition.

3. This affidavit is submitted in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant charging John I. Sanger and Eric A. Eagleton with Conspiracy to commit Theft of Government Property and Possession of Stolen Ammunition, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371.

4. The facts and information contained in this affidavit are based on personal knowledge, as well as on the observations of other agents and officers involved in this investigation. This affidavit contains information necessary to support probable cause and is not intended to include each fact, overt act, and matter observed by me or known to the government.

## INVESTIGATION

6. In August of 2021, the INJTTF opened an investigation targeting a United States Air Force (USAF) Staff Sergeant and active-duty member named John I. Sanger (“Sanger”). This matter is a joint investigation between the FBI and USAF Office of Special Investigations (“OSI”), Detachment 322, stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base. This investigation was predicated on information Sanger, identified as the user of Social Media account, “awakenedcascadian” (Social Media Account 1) and linked account, “problematicpatriot” (Social Media Account 2), was discussing committing acts of violence to further his political agenda. The provider of the Social Media Accounts 1 and 2 deactivated the accounts and referred the comments to the FBI. Your Affiant has reviewed FBI documents detailing the Social Media account posts. Specifically, your Affiant reviewed information detailing on December 2, 2020, when Sanger, utilizing Social Media Account 2, was asked by an associate what “taking our government back” looked like, Sanger responded, “I think the capital (sic) needs to be seized... No trial or chance to escape.” Additionally, on December 6, 2020, Sanger, utilizing Social Media Account 2, posted a call for the violent seizure of the U.S. Capitol building. In this post Sanger stated, “They defrauded our election system and are still getting away with it. That means this system has run it’s (sic) course. People have to die.”

7. As part of this investigation, USAF OSI successfully introduced an active-duty USAF undercover agent (“hereafter U/C”) to Sanger via an encrypted chat platform

(Chat Platform 1). Based on the U/C's access to Chat Platform 1, your Affiant learned from the U/C and your Affiant's review of the chats, that Sanger acknowledged he is a racist and blames the United States' woes on Jews and African Americans. Further, the U/C indicated Sanger also encouraged the U/C to read the Turner Diaries (a 1978 novel depicting a violent race war and the overthrow of the federal government). Sanger also told the U/C he is actively recruiting in hopes of forming a local cell of like-minded individuals.

8. On September 3, 2021, the U/C personally met with Sanger and other individuals in downtown Spokane. The group discussed several topics, including Sanger's dislike of minorities and his vehement opposition to vaccines. This meeting and all subsequent meetings between Sanger and the U/C were audio recorded and are maintained by OSI Detachment 322 at Fairchild AFB.

9. In early March 2022 Sanger advised the U/C he recently met a USAF Airman (later identified as Nathan Richards) who is stationed at Fairchild AFB and who is assigned to the 92<sup>nd</sup> Security Forces Squadron Combat Arms Training Management (CATM) section. Sanger informed the U/C several members of CATM regularly steal USAF ammunition and Sanger was asked to join them for a shoot at Fishtrap Lake shooting range on March 12, 2022. Sanger subsequently invited the U/C to attend this meeting at the shooting range.

10. On March 12, 2022, the U/C picked up Sanger at this residence and proceeded to a prearranged meet location at Petro Truck Stop located at 10506 W. Aeor Rd, in



Spokane. At this location, Sanger and the U/C met USAF SSgt Eric Eagleton and his civilian roommate John Matthew Dorman. Eagleton and Dorman arrived in Eagleton's black Ford F-150 pickup. Both individuals reside at 1618 N. Smith Road, Spokane. Eagleton told the U/C he works at Fairchild AFB in the CATM section.

11. While waiting for the additional members of CATM to arrive, Eagleton discussed with Sanger and the U/C, who was wearing an audio recording device, how he and other members of CATM steal USAF munitions intended for the general qualification training of the active-duty base personnel. Eagleton detailed stealing up to 3,000 rounds in a day and dividing the stolen ammunition between all members of the CATM section. Eagleton stated all members of the CATM section are aware of the ongoing thefts and allow it to occur.

12. Eagleton then removed a firearm suppressor from the back of his vehicle and displayed it to Sanger and the U/C. Eagleton described the suppressor as a "Shrimp Gang" brand "Mock Dead Air." Eagleton mentioned there were no markings on the suppressor and allowed the U/C to examine the item. The U/C confirmed no serial numbers or markings were observed on the device in question.

13. Eagleton stated he lived next to Spokane Community College and discussed his job at CATM stating, "Teaching these fucking retards how to handle weapons is pointless." Eagleton continued, "They literally can't remember how to clear it out, what's the point anyways, send them downrange anyways and let me steal all this ammo." Eagleton further discussed his anti-Semitic views and dislike for Jews.

Sanger told Eagleton they enjoyed meeting other individuals who, “Hated the government and the military.”

14. Several minutes later, USAF Senior Airman Jaron Chaffey and his wife, Madison Chaffey, arrived at the meet location accompanied by USAF SSgt Nathan Richards and an unknown white male. Prior to their arrival at the truck stop meet location, OSI Agents observed Eagleton drive to Richards’ residence in Airway Heights, WA, and briefly go inside. Moments later Eagleton departed Richards’ residence. Following Eagleton’s departure, a tan Subaru hatchback arrived at Richards’ residence. Jaron Chaffey, his wife Madison Chaffey, and an unknown white male exited the vehicle and entered the residence. A short time later, the three individuals, along with Nathan Richards, exited. Richards departed his residence carrying two green military style ammunition cans, a dark colored backpack, and a red water cooler. Following their departure from Richards’ residence, the four individuals entered the Subaru hatchback enroute to the truck stop meet location.

15. All the aforementioned individuals departed the meet location and travelled to the Fishtrap Lake shooting range, where the U/C observed all of the attendees load ammunition from multiple ammunition cans similar to the ammunition cans witnessed leaving Richards’ residence. According to the U/C, the packing material was consistent with munitions used by the USAF for combat arms training. The packaging included lot numbers as well as National Stock Numbers (NSNs) and a

sampling of the munitions packaging was collected at the shooting range by the U/C. A review of the lot numbers by OSI disclosed it matched lots of ammunition that were recorded as being previously expended and disposed of by the 92nd SFS CATM section.

16. While at the range, the U/C observed the attendees fire several hundred rounds of ammunition from the ammunition cans. The U/C observed three ammunition cans full of ammunition which were available for use by all attendees. The U/C observed Eagleton shoot rounds from his custom-built AR-15 style rifle, which he attached the aforementioned suppressor to it prior to shooting. Before departing the Fishtrap Lake shooting range, the U/C observed Eagleton place his rifle, along with the suppressor, into a soft sided rifle case located in the back of his black Ford F-150.

17. Prior to departing the range, Richards retrieved a clear plastic, gallon size Zip Lock bag of approximately 300-350 loose green tip 5.56 M855 rounds from the inside of his backpack. The rounds were given by Richards to Sanger and Richards informed Sanger and the U/C he stole the ammunition from the CATM section. Richards stated the CATM section was scheduled to qualify a group of USAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) members on heavy weapons, but one of the members called CATM and stated they could not make their qualification and asked for a "hook up." Members of the CATM section falsified the EOD members' records to show qualifying scores and kept the ammunition for their own



personal use. Richards further stated he has also stolen M68s (red dot Close Combat Optics) that he has at his residence.

18. An OSI review of certified CATM records revealed the last CATM expenditure of 5.56 green tip ammunition was dated November 20, 2021 and listed an expenditure of 5,400 rounds of 5.56 Ball M855 (green tip).

19. Following the shoot at Fishtrap Lake, the U/C drove Sanger back to his residence and Sanger gave the U/C approximately 60 of the stolen green tip rounds received from Richards. After providing the U/C with the stolen munitions, Sanger stated if the ATF knocked on his door, he knew which rounds to load up first since they were armor piercing. After receiving the ammunition from the U/C, OSI agents reviewed the head stamps on this ammunition and advised the munitions were manufactured at the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant in Independence, MO.

20. Your Affiant was advised by SA Joseph Cleary that on April 20, 2022 he obtained information from a Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Special Agent who is a firearms and ammunition interstate nexus examiner. Based on a preliminary examination of the ammunition, which included examining photographs of the ammunition, in conjunction with the research, knowledge and experience of the Special Agent, it was the Special Agent's opinion that the ammunition is indeed ammunition as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921(17)(A). It is the Special Agent's opinion that the ammunition was not manufactured in the State of



Washington; therefore, it has traveled in foreign and/or interstate commerce as defined by 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(2).

20. On March 28, 2022, Sanger and the U/C exchanged text messages regarding Sanger's plan to meet Eagleton the following day to receive additional stolen ammunition from Fairchild AFB. A portion of the March 28<sup>th</sup> text messages between Sanger and the U/C are as follows:

Sanger: *"Eagle (Eagleton) can hook us up with some rounds. Dude's awesome."*

U/C: *"Really? How much does he want for them?"*

Sanger: *"Nothing. It's stolen."*

U/C: *"Seriously? Bro that's awesome. Think we can get them before Saturday's range day?"*

Sanger: *"Yeah he's solid man. I'm gonna (sic) get the ammo tomorrow."*

21. In the afternoon of March 29, 2022, OSI Agents observed Eagleton and Sanger meet in the parking lot of Northern Quest Resort and Casino, located at 100 N. Hayford Rd, Airway Heights, WA. Eagleton was observed retrieving a military style green ammunition can from the back of his black Ford F-150 pickup truck. Eagleton was witnessed and photographed opening the top of the ammunition can and showing the contents to Sanger before handing the entire can to Sanger.

22. This interaction was also captured by Northern Quest Resort and Casino surveillance cameras. A copy of this video was provided to the FBI by Northern Quest Resort and Casino on March 30, 2022.

23. On March 29, 2022, at approximately 3:55pm, Sanger texted the U/C. A portion of the text exchange is as follows:

Sanger: *"But I got the ammo."*

U/C: *"nice."*

Sanger: *"5.56"*

U/C: *"Green"*

Sanger: *"No. No mags this time. 394".*

24. Sanger then texted the U/C a photograph of neatly organized ammunition which resembled 5.56mm rounds. Following this, Sanger texted the U/C stating, "Each pile represents a mag."

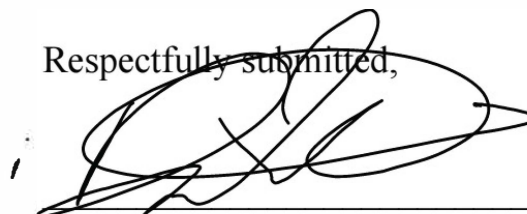
25. On April 2, 2022, the U/C and Sanger again conducted target practice at Fishtrap Lake shooting range near Sprague, WA. While at the range, Sanger and the U/C shot over 250 rounds of ammunition. The U/C observed Sanger brought ammunition consistent with the type of ammunition stolen by CATM personnel.

26. During the shoot, the U/C recovered four ammunition clips (40 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition) from Sanger which the U/C later provided to OSI personnel for evidentiary purposes. Additionally, the U/C photographed the side of the green ammunition container which Sanger brought to the shoot.

27. The photograph of the green ammunition container identified the contents as 5.56mm frangible ammunition, with the lot number FC-20A532-009. A subsequent review by OSI of ammunition expenditure records from the Fairchild AFB CATM section revealed this ammunition was allegedly expended sometime between March 2, 2021, and July 12, 2021.


28. Based upon the facts above, I have probable cause to believe that beginning on or about March 12, 2022, the Defendant, John I. Sanger, Eric Eagleton, and other identified and unidentified individuals, engaged in a conspiracy to steal government property, specifically ammunition that was the property of the United States Government, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. White, Special Agent  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

☐ Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.  
☒ Sworn to telephonically and signed electronically  
this 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022.



The Honorable James A. Goeke  
United States Magistrate Judge